

### **REMARKS**

Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Currently, claims 31-48 are pending in the present application, including independent claim 31. Claims 14-30 are being cancelled in this paper, while new claims 31-48 are being added. Independent claim 31, for instance, is directed to a personal care product comprising a nonwoven web, wherein the nonwoven web comprises a multicomponent fiber. The multicomponent fiber is formed from coextrusion of at least two components, including a first component that comprises a fiber-forming polymer and a second component that comprises an active agent and a positive displacement carrier. The positive displacement carrier comprises one or more polymers and is capable of gradually dispensing the active agent from the multicomponent fiber to a user's skin.

As discussed in Applicants' specification, the positive displacement carrier (e.g., polyvinyl pyrrolidone) included in the multicomponent fibers of the claimed personal care products gradually dispenses the active agent (e.g., a skin care agent) from the fiber by blooming or diffusing the active agent to the surface of the multicomponent fiber (and thereby to the surface of the nonwoven web and the surface of the personal care product). This gradual dispensing may minimize the amount of active agent needed in the multicomponent fibers while also extending the useful life of the personal care product. (Appl., p. 2, line 19 – p. 3, line 1). Thus, the multicomponent fibers in the personal care products claimed herein provide a wide degree of control over the rate

and uniformity of delivery of the active agent when the personal care product it in use (e.g., being worn by a user). (Appl., p. 1, lines 15-17).

In the Office Action, previous claims 14-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,162,537 to Martin, et al. Martin, et al. is directed to implantable medical articles (like the vascular graft pictured in Figure 6) and implantable fibers, webs, and textile-based structures used in medical implants. The fibers and textile-based structures of Martin, et al. include a first component formed from a substantially resorbable material and a second component formed from a fiber-forming polymer. Martin, et al. specifically defines "substantially resorbable material" as "a material which is capable of being disassembled from its original molecular form by the human body and optionally eliminated from the human body by one or more mechanisms within the human body (for example, typically within one year of implantation)." (Col. 5, lines 20-30).

Martin, et al. does not, however, teach a personal care product according to new claim 31. By way of example, "personal care products" may include diapers, training pants, refastenable pants, absorbent underpants, adult incontinence products, feminine hygiene products, and the like. No such personal care product is disclosed by Martin, et al.

Likewise, Martin, et al. does not teach the claimed personal care product in which one component of a multicomponent fiber comprises an active agent and a positive displacement carrier, wherein the positive displacement carrier comprises one or more polymers and is capable of gradually dispensing the active agent from the fiber to a user's skin. In particular, although Martin, et al. describes including a pharmaceutically

active agent into one or more components of its implantable fibers (see cols. 7-8), nowhere does Martin, et al. teach a positive displacement carrier that is capable of gradually dispensing an active agent from a multicomponent fiber to a user's skin. Again, Martin et al. focuses entirely on the inclusion of "resorbable material" in *implantable* fibers and is concerned with how long it will take for its implantable fibers to be resorbed after implantation into a human's body. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the personal care products recited in new claims 31-48 patentably define over Martin, et al.

In the Office Action, previous claims 14-30 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,770,528 to Mumick, et al. Mumick, et al. is directed to a binder composition for binding fibrous material into an integral web, wherein the binder composition comprises methylated hydroxypropylcellulose (m-HPC). Mumick, et al. describes chemically modifying HPC (e.g., through methylation) to render HPC suitable as a binder material for water-dispersible articles such as flushable personal care products. (Col. 2, lines 4-27). The m-HPC materials of Mumick, et al. are described to be useful as binders and structural components for air-laid and wet-laid nonwoven fabrics for water-dispersible products.

However, in contrast to new independent claim 31, Mumick, et al. does not disclose a multicomponent fiber formed from coextrusion of at least two components, including a first component comprising a fiber-forming polymer and a second component comprising an active agent and a positive displacement carrier, wherein the positive displacement carrier comprises one or more polymers and is capable of gradually dispensing the active agent from the fiber to a user's skin. At column 6,

Mumick, et al. describes that its m-HPC polymer may be blended with one or more hydrophobic polymers, so long as the resulting blend possesses certain properties (e.g., ion sensitive solubility, trigger temperature, and dispersibility in cold water) suitable for use in water-dispersible products. But nothing in Mumick, et al.'s description of its specific, m-HPC-containing fibers teaches Applicants' claimed personal care product, which includes a multicomponent fiber formed from coextrusion of at least two components, wherein one component comprises an active agent and a positive displacement carrier, wherein the positive displacement carrier comprises one or more polymers and is capable of gradually dispensing the active agent from the fiber to a user's skin.

Applicants' specification describes how the use of the presently claimed "positive displacement carrier" in a multicomponent fiber leads to a wide degree of control over the rate and uniformity of delivery of the active agent under conditions of intended use. (Appl., p. 2, lines 15-17). By way of example, the positive displacement carrier in the multicomponent fiber may "bloom" or diffuse the active agent to the surface of the fiber, which may minimize the amount of active agent needed and may extend the useful life of the product. No such multicomponent fibers coextruded from the components recited in the present claims are disclosed by Mumick, et al., and Applicants therefore respectfully submit that the present claims patentably define over Mumick, et al.

As such, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that the present claims patentably define over all of the prior art of record. It is believed that the present application is in complete condition for allowance and favorable action, therefore, is respectfully requested. Examiner Torres Velazquez is invited and

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encouraged to telephone the undersigned, however, should any issues remain after consideration of this Amendment.

Please charge any additional fees required by this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 04-1403.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason W. Johnston", written over a horizontal line.

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